

Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?

Although it may seem that creating COVID-19 vaccines has been rushed, safety has been a top priority every step of the way. Vaccine manufacturers have passed through many difficult steps during the vaccine approval process. Clinical trials review vaccine safety and effectiveness, producing data and other information for the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to evaluate. No vaccine is available for use in the U.S. until it meets the FDA's safety standards. Even after the FDA approves COVID-19 vaccines for use, they will continue to monitor possible side effects. There are many systems in place to report bad reactions and side effects. When people report them, scientists and medical experts quickly study them to determine a real safety concern.

Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, health experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously sick. Getting the vaccine is a safer and more controlled way to build protection since there is no way to predict how COVID-19 will affect you. Research has shown that the vaccine is safe and effective.

If I get sick after receiving the first dose of the vaccine, should I still get the second dose?

Unless you develop signs or symptoms that indicate you should not take the vaccine after the first dose, you should complete the series even if you develop the post-vaccination side effects to protect against COVID-19. Early studies show vaccine recipients have experienced some side effects after each dose, more so after the second dose.

What are the side effects of the vaccine?

Experiencing side effects is a sign that your body is building immunity. It is normal to experience minor side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Some of the common side effects include pain or swelling on the arm where you received the shot. You may also experience fever, chills, tiredness or a headache. Even if you experience these minor symptoms, it is important that you still get the second dose of the vaccine. Getting two doses is the only way to ensure that you have protection from COVID-19.

What serious side effects should I watch for after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

In most cases, experiencing a fever or pain at the injection site is normal.

Contact your doctor or healthcare provider:

- If the redness or tenderness where you received the shot increases after 24 hours
- If your side effects remain after a few days

In rare cases, the Moderna vaccine causes a severe allergic reaction, usually within a few minutes to an hour after getting the vaccine. Contact your healthcare provider immediately or call 911.

Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of your face and throat
- A fast heartbeat
- A bad rash all over your body
- Dizziness and weakness

Will I be monitored for any side effects after I receive the vaccine?

Yes. Vaccine providers will observe patients after giving the vaccination to watch for immediate bad reactions. A healthcare worker will monitor people with a history of severe allergic reactions for 30 minutes. They will monitor everyone else for other side effects for 15 minutes.

Do I have to continue wearing a mask after I get the vaccine?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently updated their recommendations for fully vaccinated people, due to the increase in COVID-19 cases related to the Delta variant. According to the CDC, in order to reduce your risk of becoming infected with the Delta variant and potentially spreading it to others, you should wear a mask in public indoor settings if you are in an area of [substantial or high transmission](#). Additionally, you may choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, if you (or someone in your household) have a medical condition or are taking medications that weaken your immune system. Talk to your healthcare provider about steps you can take to manage your health and risks.

Sources

[CDC. COVID-19. After Getting the Vaccine](#) | [CDC. COVID-19. Frequently Asked Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

[Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions](#) | [Houston Methodist. Coronavirus Vaccine Community FAQs](#)